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THE SITUATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-eighth year

Letter dated 18 January 1993 from the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to present to you herewith a copy of my letter, dated 24 November 1992, to the President of the Security Council (see annex).

The letter was sent via fax to member States of the Security Council; however, it was not distributed as requested, for technical reasons.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating the text of the present letter and its annex as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 143, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador and Permanent Representative

ANNEX

Letter dated 24 November 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Mr. José María Mendiluce of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) advised yesterday that Serbian and Montenegrin military forces have denied access for food deliveries to Gorazde and Srebrenica in Bosnia and Herzegovina, two towns that are in desperate need. Mr. Mendiluce noted that Serb and Montenegrin forces chronically interfere with United Nations convoys.

Such interference with the delivery of humanitarian assistance imminently threatens the lives of hundreds of thousands of people. It cruelly increases their suffering and quite directly furthers the scheme of ethnic cleansing.

Exposure, disease and hunger are now the aggressor's principal tools of ethnic cleansing, as effective or perhaps more effective than even bombs or bullets. With increasing numbers of people placed at risk, the situation more than ever calls for forceful action by the Security Council.

Security Council resolution 770 of 13 August 1992 called upon States:

> "to take nationally or through regional agencies or arrangements all measures necessary to facilitate in coordination with the United Nations the delivery by relevant United Nations humanitarian organizations and others of humanitarian assistance to Sarajevo and wherever needed in other parts of Bosnia and Herzegovina". (emphasis added)

The resolution also requested "all States to provide appropriate support for the actions undertaken in pursuance of this resolution".

Clearly "all measures necessary" have not been taken, and States have not provided appropriate support. With so many human lives at risk, Mr. Mendiluce is still forced to "play poker", as he says, with the Serb and Montenegrin military.

It is extraordinary that United Nations forces still do not have the will or the weapons to break through roadblocks where necessary to save lives, even when Security Council resolution 770 (1992) gives them this authority.

It is therefore with great urgency that I request that you take action pursuant to Security Council resolution 770 (1992). In particular, I request that you issue a statement requesting:

(a) That Security Council resolution 770 (1992) be invoked fully in the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

(b) That member States that have offered to provide troops do so immediately as they are critical to the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

(c) Other member States to provide new troops for humanitarian purposes;

(d) That air drops of food commence immediately as a temporary measure until all necessary troops are stationed.

The foregoing steps are essential if we are to stop Serbian and Montenegrin extremists from "playing poker" with UNHCR, and from playing with the lives of thousands of innocent civilians. Exposing or admonishing those responsible for interference with humanitarian assistance will not be enough.

May I ask for your kind assistance in circulating the present letter as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 143, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Muhamed SACIRBEY
Ambassador and Permanent Representative